

Inspection of a good school: St Paul's Church of England Primary School

Elsworthy Road, Primrose Hill, London NW3 3DS

Inspection dates:

2 and 3 November 2021

Outcome

St Paul's Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This school community is warm, vibrant and welcoming. Underpinned by its faith ethos, staff promote values such as being kind and respectful to all people. There are strong relationships between pupils and with adults alike. Pupils feel safe and secure. They enjoy coming to school, learning and taking part in enrichment activities. As one pupil put it, 'We laugh with each other and not at each other.'

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' learning. Teachers encourage pupils to persevere and keep trying to improve when they find the work challenging. This helps pupils develop resilience and gain new knowledge.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are helpful and considerate. Pupils said that bullying is rare. However, they know that staff deal with any inappropriate behaviours thoroughly and fairly.

Staff teach and encourage pupils to become responsible citizens. Every year, pupils raise money for charity. They support a school in Malawi and lately helped local Afghan refugees. During a recent assembly, they considered the human contribution to climate change. They reflected on what they could do to play their part in combatting this global challenge.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils to gain deep knowledge across a broad curriculum. They give the teaching of reading a high priority. They know the ability to read with fluency is the gateway to accessing all subjects. Within a few days of arriving in Reception, children start to learn to read. Staff have the expertise to teach the well-sequenced phonics programme effectively. Staff help pupils in a variety of ways to learn to love and value reading. In Reception, for instance, staff take children to see a theatrical production of one of the children's favourite books. Staff make sure that pupils practise their reading with books that match the sounds they have learned. Staff identify quickly

pupils who struggle to keep up with the phonics programme. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff and trained volunteers provide extra support, and in turn help these pupils to catch up. As a result, pupils become fluent readers and expand their vocabulary.

Curriculum leaders work with colleagues, including those from other local schools, to identify the knowledge that pupils need to gain. Across the subjects, leaders have planned the teaching of subject content and lessons in a logical way. This helps pupils gain new knowledge and build on previous learning. Subject leaders and Reception staff work in close collaboration. They ensure that Reception children gain secure foundations in their knowledge and skills across all areas of learning. For instance, a range of planned activities help children to understand the concept of past, present and future. This puts them on a strong footing for future learning in history.

Teachers gain much from subject-specific training. This training assists them in ensuring that pupils acquire secure knowledge in the various subjects. They are well informed about the individual needs of pupils with SEND. They make adaptations to their teaching to meet all pupils' needs. For example, teachers give visual resources, such as videos, to develop pupils' understanding. These adaptations to teaching ensure that all pupils can gain the same knowledge.

In a few subjects, some elements of planning and teaching of the curriculum are not fully developed. This means that pupils do not gain as much knowledge as they could. In computing, for instance, staff are not checking what pupils know and remember. In history, leaders have not thought through as clearly what they want pupils to remember long term.

Pupils are attentive in class and eager to learn. In Reception, children concentrate and follow their teachers' instructions. These positive attitudes and behaviours in class help pupils to gain new knowledge.

Pupils benefit from the many enrichment activities on offer. These range from early morning runs to chess and art clubs. Pupils take part in local music events and give choral performances. They produce a Shakespearian play together with other schools and participate in dance festivals. Staff teach pupils about fundamental British values, how to stay safe and how to build healthy and positive relationships.

Leaders treat staff with care and consideration. Staff highlighted their appreciation of the new arrangement for their planning and preparation time. They feel it has contributed to them achieving a better work-life balance.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know pupils and families well. They are alert to any changes in pupils' behaviour and other signs that give rise to potential safeguarding and welfare concerns. There is a strong culture of reporting these concerns to leaders. Leaders arrange early help and

work with external agencies, such as social workers, to ensure that pupils get the support they need to ensure their safety and well-being.

Leaders follow the proper procedures for vetting candidates' suitability to work with pupils.

Pupils learn about risk and how to avoid danger, such as when using the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, some elements of planning and implementation have not been fully embedded. This means that pupils do not always know and remember as much as they could. Leaders should ensure that in all subjects they identify what they want pupils to know and remember long term. They should plan activities to help pupils embed new core knowledge in their long-term memories. Staff should routinely assess what pupils know and remember. They should use the information to identify gaps and misconceptions and to adapt teaching to address these.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually, this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 2011.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	100046
Local authority	Camden
Inspection number	10200137
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	196
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	James Sawtell
Headteacher	Clive Hale
Website	http://www.stpauls.camden.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 October 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- School leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school is a voluntary-aided Church of England faith school.
- The school's last Section 48 Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) inspection was on 2 February 2017.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other leaders. He met with the chair of the governing body, as well as five other governors. He had telephone conversations with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the London Diocesan Board for Schools.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, computing and history. For each deep dive, he met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and

looked at samples of pupils' work. He also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.

- The inspector checked the school's policies and records and spoke with the designated safeguarding leader, senior leaders, governors, pupils, staff, parents and carers to check on the school's culture of safeguarding.
- The inspector had formal meetings with staff and with pupils. He spoke with parents in the playground. He took account of the 45 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, which included many written comments. He also considered the nine responses to the staff survey and 32 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

David Radomsky, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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